

INSPECTION REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF DENOMINATIONAL EDUCATION

School name: St Maria Goretti Catholic Primary School
 Address: Gamull Lane, Ribbleton, Preston
 Unique Reference Number: 119608
 Name of Headteacher: Mrs Diane Gallagher
 Date of Inspection: 26th November 2008
 Name of Inspector: Mrs Margaret Wright
 Type of school: Catholic Primary
 Age range of pupils: 4 - 11
 Number on roll: 158
 Appropriate authority: The Governing Body
 Chair of Governors: Fr T Sullivan
 Religious Education Co-ordinator: Mrs Diane Gallagher
 Date of previous inspection: 22nd-23rd February 2005

The Inspection judgements are:	Grade	Explanation of the grades 1 = Outstanding 2 = Good 3 = Satisfactory 4 = Inadequate
Overall effectiveness of the school	3	
Leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school	3	
The quality of Collective Worship	3	
Religious Education - Achievement and standards	3	
Religious Education - Quality of provision	3	
Religious Education - Pupils' needs and interest	3	
Religious Education – Curriculum leadership and management	3	
Community Cohesion	3	
<i>The following pages provide reasons to support these judgements</i>		

Information about the school:

St Maria Goretti is a Voluntary Aided Catholic primary School serving the parish of St Maria Goretti in Ribbleton, Preston. There are currently 158 pupils on roll of whom 78 are baptised Catholics and a very small minority are from other world faiths. The majority of pupils transfer to Corpus Christi High School. There has been a period of instability in leadership and staffing resulting in many difficulties for the school including a decline in pupil numbers and changes in staff. The school now has a new headteacher and a permanent and stable staffing structure in place.

Overall Effectiveness of the school

Inspection judges the overall effectiveness of the school to be **satisfactory** but there are already good systems and procedures in place to move the school forward. Strong, focussed leadership, rooted firmly in the Catholic ethos, has revitalised the school community and the new school motto 'Shining with Love, Pride and Success' underpins all that the school aims to achieve. There is good work in progress in developing opportunities for collective worship and an understanding of the need to develop greater independence amongst pupils in planning and delivery of their own acts of worship.

Standards and progress in curriculum religious education are currently satisfactory. Staff work hard to plan and deliver lessons, which engage all learners, but there is not always sufficient challenge and work still needs to be done in developing teachers' understanding of assessment in curriculum RE.

The school is ambitious for itself, for pupils, families and the community it serves. It faces challenges to continue building community cohesion with dedication and enthusiasm, based on the firm belief in its Catholicity and a desire to reach out to all.

Improvement since the last inspection

Since last inspection the school has undergone major changes at all levels of school life. This has significantly impacted on the school's actions in carrying out the key issues for action, however inspection judges that since the new leadership has been in place progress has been **satisfactory**.

- There is still a need to raise standards so that all pupils are sufficiently challenged.
- Provision for Collective Worship for older pupils has been addressed through the modelling by the headteacher of high quality worship, but the element of pupil planning and delivery is still not present.
- Although the Mission Statement has not yet been reviewed the school has firm plans to carry this out in spring 2009. In addition the focus on the new school motto and logo has had a very positive impact upon the Catholic ethos of the school by refocusing the whole community in a commitment to 'love, pride and success'.

Capacity to improve

With the continued commitment of all staff and governors, ably led by the new headteacher, the school has **good** capacity to improve and to raise standards in all areas.

What the school should do to improve further:

- To raise standards further in curriculum religious education by ensuring that there is sufficient challenge and that time is given to allow meaningful learning to take place.
- Establish base lines for each key stage to improve the monitoring of pupils' progress and standards attained.
- To develop pupils' opportunities to independently plan and lead worship at age appropriate levels.
- Governors should strengthen their monitoring of the Catholic ethos of the school and the standards attained by pupils in curriculum RE.
- Extend the good working relationships established with the church and parish community to other communities across the local area.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

The school judges leadership and management of the Catholic life of the school to be **satisfactory** and inspection confirms this judgement, but considers that the school has the capacity to be good in the near future. The new school motto is shared and understood by the whole community and is evidenced through displays, celebrations and the quality of relationships. Senior management has been very proactive in reaching those groups who have, in recent years, become disengaged with the Catholic life of the school. There are good links with home and parish and the chair of governors has a good understanding of the position of the school through close liaison with the headteacher. There now needs to be a greater involvement of the whole governing body in monitoring the work of the school both in its commitment to its Catholic mission and in its understanding of the school's position in regards to curriculum religious education.

The new headteacher has already begun this process through headteacher reports and a briefing to governors on the standards and progress in curriculum religious education. The governors are aware of the importance of the Catholicity of the school when making new appointments.

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The provision for collective worship is currently **satisfactory** overall but there are elements of good provision already in place. The new headteacher, who is also the subject leader, has drawn up a collective worship policy in consultation with staff, pupils and governors. This is a comprehensive document outlining very clearly the purpose and range of opportunities available at St Maria Goretti's. The policy highlights scripture, music and a wide range of experiences including drama and reflection. At present the emphasis has been on modelling good quality collective worship and as such nearly all acts of worship are delivered by staff. Collective worship is having a positive effect on pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils can talk about their experiences of collective worship. In year two pupils understand that we light a candle to remind us of Jesus, the Light of the World, and can talk about how they make contributions to class worship through choosing music and candles.

Each class has an area of focus for collective worship, which includes books of prayers, artefacts and a limited range of books. There is involvement with the parish in various liturgical celebrations and this area is being enhanced through the use of music. The school has rightly identified the need to develop pupil leadership in collective worship as the next stage in its development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

Overall standards in curriculum RE are **satisfactory** as evidenced by moderated work and a scrutiny of pupils' work for this year. Standards are generally in line with those of other core subjects. Although the staff could talk about previous moderation exercises there is little evidence of its use to identify trends over time. Given that the previous inspection report highlighted raising standards this is still an area for development.

The school has adopted a new RE scheme and new staff are becoming familiar with materials and levels of attainment. There is a good general system in place to assess baseline in Reception based on the Early Years Foundation profile and the school would benefit from extending this to get a clearer picture of where the children come into school in terms of their knowledge of religion. This would then help them to show the rate of progress and the value added factor that the school makes. Inspection could only confirm judgements on progress since April 2008. This shows that most pupils are making satisfactory progress across key stages one and two and in both attainment targets there is a good balance between Learning about Religion (AT1) and Learning from Religion (AT2). This was confirmed through scrutiny of work, teachers' plans and discussions with groups of pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - QUALITY OF PROVISION

The quality of provision for RE overall is judged by the school to be **satisfactory** and inspection confirms this view. Teachers demonstrate a secure and sometimes good understanding of the scheme in use and are developing a good understanding of how to use assessment in planning and delivering the curriculum content. At times the over reliance on the use of the set tasks for assessment provided by the scheme does not allow the children to engage in more challenging learning.

In some instances teaching activities, as evidenced in pupils' books, do not offer sufficient opportunities to extend pupils' thinking, relying more on copying texts or the use of 'closed activities'. Taught time in curriculum RE meets the requirements of the Bishops' Conference but time allocations across the week do not always allow sustained learning to take place.

Teachers' planning takes account of different ability groups and teachers were able to give examples of how they differentiate for the learners in their classes. This was confirmed through discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – PUPILS' NEEDS AND INTEREST

The school's judgement of **satisfactory** is confirmed by inspection. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their learning in curriculum RE. They demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning and are proud to show and discuss their work. Year six pupils are able to discuss injustice and link it to stories from the Old Testament. Reception pupils can talk about who they love and know that Jesus' mother was called Mary. Year two pupils can name some of the formal prayers of the church and know some stories from the Old Testament such as the story of Daniel.

Everyone in the school is working hard to ensure that all pupils, especially those 'hard to reach' groups, are catered for within curriculum RE and beyond. At present they closely follow the new scheme of work but are already discussing how they can adapt it to best meet the needs of all pupils. This is evidenced through examples such as the work of the learning mentor, the use of cross-curricular approaches and a development of units on other world faiths.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – CURRICULUM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school has judged this aspect to be **satisfactory** and inspection confirms this judgement allowing for the recent difficulties the school has faced in unsettled staffing and leadership. The subject leader has, in a very short period of time, made a clear and focused analysis of the current position in curriculum RE and the school is well placed to become good with its existing curriculum leadership and management. Staff speak highly of the level of support they are offered and of the rigor of scrutiny and commitment to curriculum RE. A new deputy who will take up position in January will take over this curriculum role. Good progress has already been made in the development of a coherent RE action plan.

Although the current subject leader has reported to governors in the headteacher's report on standards in curriculum RE there is insufficient awareness amongst governors of the standards and progress in curriculum RE and their monitoring role should be strengthened.

COMMUNITY COHESION

The school judges this aspect to be **satisfactory** and inspection confirms this. The new leadership team has worked very hard to rebuild trust in the school after a very difficult period in the life of the school and pride and trust in the community has been greatly strengthened. The headteacher's report gives examples of how the school is promoting community cohesion both within the school and in the parish. New opportunities such as out of school care, the promotion of positive role models through outside providers and the involvement with the parish in celebration and catechesis all serve to enrich the experiences for the whole school community. This could usefully be extended to working with different communities in the school's locality. The school has also shown its commitment to the wider community through its links with Cardinal Newman College and its fund raising for national charities such as Children in Need. There are plans to be involved with further international charities in the future, thus widening the pupils' understanding of community cohesion and universal need.